

February 3, 2022

The Honorable Louis DeJoy
Postmaster General
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20260-3500

Dear Postmaster General DeJoy:

Over the past several weeks, constituents across my district in Central Virginia have contacted my office about mail delivery issues. From Nottoway to Culpeper, individuals have reported going more than a week without mail. As the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) begins to distribute millions of COVID-19 tests across the country, I am concerned about further delivery inconsistencies for those I represent. Delayed delivery of these tests is not only an inconvenience but could have serious consequences for the health and safety of communities across the country.

Though mail delivery has generally improved over the past year and a half, Central Virginians continue to contact my office for assistance locating their missing mail. I understand that the Omicron variant has contributed to worker shortages across the country – including at the USPS. I am grateful for the dedicated Postal employees, many of whom are working late hours and covering additional routes to serve their communities and uphold USPS' mission of providing universal service.

However, I am also keenly aware that many of the delays in mail delivery are a direct result of the controversial reforms implemented by your office to slash costs at the expense of the timeliness of mail delivery. The decision to extend standard delivery times in October 2021 and to raise prices in 2021 and 2022 have been especially harmful to many rural communities, like those I represent across Central Virginia. As such, I continue to have serious concerns about these so-called "reforms," and the impact they may have in this moment when the USPS is being trusted to carry out essential public health functions as a part of our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

While I support the USPS in partnering with the Administration to deliver rapid COVID-19 tests for households across the country, I am concerned about the impact on mail delivery for my constituents. I am especially concerned about the delivery of COVID-19 tests for those households currently experiencing mail delivery issues.

Accordingly, I would appreciate a response to the following:

1. Please list the current number of open positions in Virginia.
2. I understand the USPS is hiring temporary staff to assist with the distribution of tests. Are there currently shortages among temporary staff? If so, please elaborate.

3. Does the USPS engage in efforts to transition temporary staff to permanent staff if there is a shortage of permanent staff?
4. The USPS directs those experiencing various issues ordering COVID tests to the USPS Customer Care Center. Has the USPS hired additional staff to field calls to the USPS Customer Care line?
5. What is the mechanism of coordination between the USPS, postal unions, Administration officials, and the U.S. Digital Service?
6. How does the USPS intend to communicate with customers if there is a delay in the supply of tests, therefore causing a delay in deliveries?
 - a. If this is not the responsibility of the USPS, whose is it?

The USPS provides an essential service for Americans across the country. Without a functioning USPS, Central Virginians cannot reliably receive lifesaving prescription medications, bills, and letters from loved ones, and many local businesses cannot fill customer orders in a timely manner.

As the USPS adds COVID-19 tests to this list, I look forward to hearing from you regarding my questions above. Thank you for your attention to this important matter, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Abigail Spanberger
Member of Congress